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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Country and intercountry programmes and projects

FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR VENEZUELA

Note by the Administrator

I. PROGRAMMING PROCESS

1. The programming of the fifth country programme for Venezuela was formally initiated in July 1991 with the consideration of the Government's national priorities, programmes and strategies. This process included analysis of the programme guidelines contained in United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989 and Governing Council decision 90/34 of 23 June 1990.

2. The final formulation of the fifth programme, carried out by the Government with the help of the Resident Representative's office, brings together the recommendations made in UNDP's note to the Government of September 1991, during the general assessment of the fourth programme and in working meetings with the Central Office for Coordination and Planning (CORDIPLAN) of the Presidency of the Republic, with the specialized governmental bodies and with representatives of United Nations specialized agencies and other cooperating agencies with offices in Venezuela, as well as the comments made by other specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

II. THE FIFTH COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR VENEZUELA

3. The main goal of the fifth country programme for Venezuela, which covers the period 1992-1996, is to strengthen the capacity of the Government to carry out the transformation of the State, which constitutes the main axis of the country's development strategy.

4. UNDP's cooperation strategy, based on the modalities and experience of the fourth cycle, is mainly focused on catalysing activities directed towards institutional reinforcement, the training of human resources in modern management styles and better use of the financial resources obtained through the multilateral banks.

5. Within the general framework of the transformation of the State, which is the main theme of the fifth programme, four lines of action have been identified in which UNDP has comparative advantages for providing direct cooperation and encouraging the support of the United Nations specialized agencies and other cooperating bodies. These lines of action coincide with the outlines of the Eighth National Plan, the Government's priorities, the global goals of the United Nations system and the human development strategy.

6. Special emphasis is given to the decentralization and modernization of the public sector and public participation, to which 30.96 per cent of total resources is allocated; this coincides with the Government's interest in the institutional reform of the State as the central programme around which the other programmes are articulated and organized. The main goals of this line of action are laid down in the Act on Decentralization, Definition and Transfer of Public Powers and consists of supporting the scheme for the distribution of powers between the central government and the other levels of the public sector, and the professionalization of public management as an instrument of administrative reform; the strengthening of development and the transfer of advanced management techniques; promoting the identification and solution of problems in the organizational and institutional development of state and municipal government; strengthening the statistical and informational system at the central, regional and local levels; strengthening the process of decision-making and follow-up in the central government; helping to identify plans and programmes favouring the improvement and modernization of the administration of justice, and bringing the electoral system into conformity with the new state model.

7. The social management area is linked to the programme of equitable social development and the elimination of poverty. The main goals of this line of action are connected with the Poverty Confrontation Plan and the programmes of the Ministry of the Family, which is in the process of transforming itself into a Ministry of Social Development, and consists of strengthening the provision of social services in health, nutrition, education and housing through an increase in the real income of poor families; concentrating the actions and resources directed towards the most vulnerable groups; increasing the participation of civil society in social programmes and services, and strengthening the Ministry of the Family's directing role in social policy.

This area will receive 22.03 per cent of the total resources of the fifth programme to further the activities referred to.

8. The area of the environment and natural resources is associated with the needs, emphasized in the Eighth National Plan, to make progress in the areas of environmental protection and territorial management. UNDP's cooperation will be directed towards the Ministry of the Environment and Renewable Natural Resources in the planning and implementation of machinery, standards and regulations intended to ensure the proper and useful application of the policies of use, protection and conservation of natural resources, particularly hydraulic and safe water resources; supporting the extension of decentralization and social participation in environmental investment decisions and in the restoration of degraded ecological conditions in the Rio Tuy basin and Lake Valencia; expanding ecological knowledge as a basis for the sustainable exploitation of natural resources and their efficient management in the Amazonas Federal Territory, and continuing to support the modernization of the meteorological information system. The Government has agreed to allocate 26.91 per cent of the total resources of the fifth programme of these activities.

9. The production sector is highly important to the strategy of State reform as its modernization would make it possible to upgrade distribution models and replace them with a model of sustained productive development integrated into the world market. UNDP's cooperation will be directed towards stimulating the country's economic growth through the restructuring and modernization of its production system; the development of small and medium private sector industry; the restructuring of the basic public-sector enterprises; designing policies for the substantial improvement of investment flows and use; the adoption of new technologies, and programmes of support and modernization for technical education and for educational restructuring in general, as a basis for the better utilization of human resources for the development of the production sector. This area will receive 10.10 per cent of the total resources of the fifth programme to further the activities referred to.

10. The Administrator notes with gratitude the effort made by the Government of Venezuela to contribute substantial cost-sharing resources for the implementation of the fifth programme, which will involve $3.72 million in IPF resources and cost-sharing of $21.64 million. In addition it is expected that supplementary resources on the order of $3.73 million will be made available from other sources. The IPF resources are in the nature of seed money in UNDP's cooperation strategy for the fifth programme.

III. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

11. The national execution system constitutes an essential component of UNDP's cooperation strategy for the fifth programme. It is planned that this system of execution will be consolidated during the fifth cycle, so that the Government bodies, in addition to continuing to exercise the directing and technical functions of cooperation, will gradually assume the administrative and logistic responsibilities inherent in that system.

12. The general functions of coordination, follow-up and evaluation of the fifth programme for Venezuela will continue to be the joint responsibility of the UNDP Resident Representative's office and CORDIPLAN, as the national body responsible for the coordination of international cooperation and the preparation and evaluation of national plans and programmes. An intermediate in-depth evaluation is planned for 1994, in addition to the thematic evaluations to be carried out during the execution of the fifth programme.

IV. RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADMINISTRATOR

13. The plan of the fifth programme for Venezuela was worked out through consensus and coordination between the Government, the specialized agencies of the United Nations and UNDP. It emphasizes UNDP's strategy of functional cooperation in the country, which had a good impact on the fourth programme in terms of the main national development priorities. By its nature, the fifth programme will be nationally executed, and will make considerable use of national human resources and capacities, for the purpose of increasing the country's self-sufficiency.

14. In view of the above, the Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve the fifth programme for Venezuela.